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ABSTRACT

This study identified practicing master teachers' perceptions of the functional differences between beginning teacher competencies in general elementary education and those in special education for elementary students with mild learning and/or behavior problems. Two groups, composed of six special education teachers and six general education teachers, worked to sort and label competencies pertinent to general education, special education, and both. The two groups then met to form a single list of competencies reflecting a consensus of opinion. Both general educators and special educators relied heavily upon formal knowledge (i.e., competencies identified by professional organizations or those in the published literature). No competencies were identified by either group solely based upon informal knowledge. Many of the same competencies were selected by both groups, yet there was some variation in the sources of formal knowledge selected. Only a few competencies were identified exclusively for general education or exclusively for special education. Results imply that practicing master teachers may be very much aware of the similarities in general and special education and perceive the differences as minimal. An appendix provides a list of the competencies. (JDD)

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Practicing Master Teacher Perceptions of Inclusion Teacher Competencies

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Practicing Master Teacher Perceptions of Inclusion Teacher Competencies

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Practicing Master Teacher Perceptions of Inclusion Teacher Competencies

A number of professional organizations and leaders in education are strongly advocating reform in the administrative arrangement of special education in the public schools. These groups include the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE,1992), Alabama school district superintendents (1993, January: The University of Alabama Superintendents' Conference), The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC, 1993), National Joint Council on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD, 1993), and Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD,1993). Specifically "inclusion" as a service delivery format is being advocated. Essentially, inclusion is a 100% mainstreaming model where the general education teacher is responsible for the growth and development of students with disabilities. Pull-out programs in special education (e.g. resource rooms, self-contained classrooms, etc.) are virtually eliminated for students with mild disabilities. In this model, the role of the special education teacher is to participate in collaborative consultation, team- or co-teach classes, and generally act as a resource and advocate for the needs of children with disabilities within the school. It is anticipated that this will place greater responsibilities on the general educator for the education of a variety of students representing multiple abilities. This new organization will require more sophisticated understandings of how to meet these needs within complex settings. Ideally, elementary teachers should possess the full-range of competencies necessary for the

management of instruction for students without disabilities as well as meet the needs of those with disabilities.

Organizations such as CLD (1993) and CEC (1993) recognize that a continuum of services must be available for all students and that the goal of inclusion should be pursued in schools for those students for whom it is deemed appropriate. Specifically, CEC noted in its recent policy statement on inclusion:

> ...children, youth, and young adults with disabilities should be served whenever possible in general education classrooms in inclusive neighborhood schools and community settings.

From an administrative perspective, there are numerous advantages of inclusion programs, including (a) possible vast reduction in the cost of special education, (b) elimination of shortages in certified special education teachers, and (c) reduction in space problems in overcrowded schools due to elimination of special education classrooms. Potentially, there are also numerous social and instructional advantages as well. While the advantages may be numerous, the pragmatic implications of preparing general education teachers to work in inclusion settings are a serious concern.

Likewise, there are numerous potential disadvantages of such a model. These include: (a) possible inability to provide the depth of preservice training necessary for beginning teachers to become effective inclusion teachers within a limited time frame (e.g. four year program),

(b) the potential for teachers to ineffectively meet the instructional needs of students with disabilities within general education classrooms, and (c) the promulgation of negative attitudes about students with disabilities, particularly those with disabilities that are not physically apparent within inclusion classes.

The inclusion model is based on the assumptions that (a) the curriculum in general education and in special education should be the same, (b) considerable redundancy in the competencies of general education and special education teachers exists, and (c) all teachers should possess skills for intervening with learning and behavior problems associated with children with mild disabilities. Much of the rationale for the inclusion model is based on assumptions that have not been thoroughly validated. Limited research has examined the effectiveness of the inclusion model, and assumptions upon which this model is based have a small, but growing body, of empirical evidence to support them. Moreover, the inclusion model is being advocated largely in the absence of careful analysis of the range of competencies general education teachers responsible for the education of students with mild disabilities are expected to possess. Two issues and pertinent questions associated with the movement are the identification of the competencies an inclusion teacher should possess upon entering the teaching field and the implications for teacher education programs. Clearly, few beginning teachers are adequately prepared for roles in inclusion settings (NJCLD, 1993), thus, there is a need for teacher preparation

programs which focus on providing appropriate education for teaching a variety of students representing multiple abilities (i.e. students with a diverse range of abilities and mild disabilities in the same classroom).

Presumably, there is some redundancy between general and special education competencies, but there are also numerous differences which should be examined in the creation of new teacher preparation programs and in the modification of existing programs. Preparing teachers who possess the full range of competencies logically implies that future teacher preparation programs must add to the competencies currently being developed by prospective teachers. Teacher preparation in general elementary education /early-childhood programs and special education programs may need to be expanded to include competencies from both general education and special education. Competencies need to be examined to remove redundancy if the programs are to be merged. This expansion in scope must take place either (a) within an existing time frame (e.g. completion of teacher education within a four year program) or (b) additional time will be required (e.g. a fifth or sixth year, etc.). In light of the current "packed" nature of existing teacher preparation programs and apparent redundancy in teacher education programs, a careful analysis of general and special education competencies is imperative.

Practicing master teachers in both general education and special education possess valuable knowledge concerning the competencies necessary to effectively teach in traditional classrooms and meet the

needs of students with mild disabilities in these settings. Thus, their knowledge is an important source to be utilized in planning teacher education programs designed to prepare teachers to serve students with multiple abilities in inclusion classrooms.

Competencies for beginning inclusion teachers should be examined from two perspectives: formal and informal knowledge. Formal knowledge refers to those general and special education competencies identified by professional organizations (e.g. CEC, National Association for the Education of Young Children, etc.). These also include competencies reflected by the professional literature (e.g. professional journals, books, etc.). Informal knowledge concerns those competencies, not necessarily represented in formal documents, that experienced teachers possess about the daily operation and instruction of students both with and without disabilities.

The purpose of the study was to identify practicing master teachers' perceptions of the functional differences between beginning teacher competencies in general elementary education K-6 and those in special education K-6 for elementary students with mild learning and/or behavior problems.

Method

Participants

Six special education teachers of students with mild disabilities and six general education teachers from elementary schools from two school districts participated in the analysis of essential competencies. They were selected on the basis of one or more of the following reasons: (a) knowledge of and/or interest in inclusion, (b) current planning of and/or participation in inclusion situations within their schools, (c) experience as mentoring (cooperating) teachers to student teachers from the University, (d) experience with a project designed to strengthen communication and relations among university teacher education faculty and teachers in the public schools, and/or (e) outstanding teacher ability and dedication to working with students with diverse learning needs. One of the teachers had recent teaching experience in the general education classroom and was considered a Teacher in Residence in the teacher education department at the University at the time of the study. One of the special education teachers was a doctoral student in teacher education at the University who had previous teaching experience in elementary special education. She also assisted with coordination and implementation of the study.

Design

The study was divided into three stages: (1) Orientation Meeting, (2) Analysis of Teacher Competencies, and (3) Compilation of Teacher Competencies.

Stage 1 - Orientation Meeting

During the first stage, the six special education and six general education teachers met with two university education professors who were conducting the study. The educators discussed the importance of general education and special education teachers working together in the schools and gave examples of situations where this was presently occurring in their schools. They were given an overview of the study and instructions (oral and written) for their participation in the study. Each participant was provided a notebook containing 14 sources of information (e.g. professional organizations' position statements, published competencies, research articles related to competencies, etc.. see Table 1). Participants were asked to review the notebooks of published competencies and information on inclusion before the next meeting, approximately a month later. They also were asked to note any information from the lists of published competencies as well as from their personal knowledge and experience which would be helpful in later constructing a list of competencies.

Table 1

Sources of Published Information on Teacher Competencies and Inclusion

Alabama State Department Regulations for Learning Disabled, Mentally Retarded, Emotionally Conflicted, Elementary Education, and Early Childhood Education.

The Council for Exceptional Children (*CEC) Policy on Inclusive Schools and Community Settings* (1993).

The CEC Common Core of Knowledge and Skills Essential for All Beginning Special Education Teachers (Swan & Sirvis, 1992).

Educating Students with Mild Handicaps in General Education Classrooms: Essential Teaching Practices for General and Special Educators (Cannon, Idol, & West, 1992).

Essential Collaborative Consultation Competencies for Regular and Special Educators (West & Cannon, 1988).

The DLD Competencies for Teachers of Students with Learning Disabilities (DLD/CEC, 1992).

Appropriate Education in the Primary Grades: A Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 1989).

NAEYC Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice in the Primary Grades, Serving 5- Through 8-Year Olds (NAEYC, 1988).

NAEYC Position Statements on Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs (NAEYC, 1986).

NAEYC Position Statement on Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Programs for 4- and 5-Year Olds (NAEYC, 1986).

Early Childhood Teacher Certification: A Position Statement of the Association of Teacher Educators and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (ATE & NAEYC, 1991).

Guidelines for Appropriate Curriculum Content and Assessment in Programs Serving Children Ages 3 Through 8: A Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 1991).

Standards for Quality Programs for Young Children: Early Childhood Education and the Elementary School Principal (NAESP, 1990).

Winners All: A Call for Inclusive Schools: The Report of the NASBE Study Group on Special Education (NASBE, 1992).

Stage 2 - Analysis of Teacher Competencies

The purpose of Stage 2 was to identify those competencies from published literature (formal knowledge) and those not contained in published literature (informal knowledge) which teachers perceive as essential for work in inclusion settings. To begin Stage 2, participants individually reviewed published competencies. Then two separate group meetings (one for the special education teachers and one for the general education teachers) were conducted. Each group sorted and labeled all competencies pertinent to General Education and those pertinent to Special Education. Next, each group identified overlapping competencies and placed them in one of three categories: (1) General Education, (2) Common, and (3) Special Education. Competencies pertinent exclusively to general education were placed in the General Education category and competencies pertinent exclusively to special education were placed under the Special Education category. Competencies common to both general education and special education were included in the Common category. Group meetings were held at different times for participants' convenience but also with the intent of curtailing the possibility of one group's discussion of the task influencing the other group's decisions.

After the completion of Stage 2 and prior to Stage 3, results from the special education teacher group and the general education teacher group were compiled by the researchers. The compilation of competencies reflected the similarities and differences as to their

placement in the categories of General Education, Common, and Special Education and slight differences in wording. Only the special education group had chosen to further categorize competencies by areas (see Table 2).

Stage 3 - Compilation of Teacher Competencies

The general education and special education groups met to form a single list of competencies reflecting a consensus of opinion regarding necessary teacher competencies for serving students with multiple abilities in inclusion classrooms. Participants were given copies of compiled results of the two group meetings. Group consensus eventually was reached as to the appropriate placement of competencies in the three categories. The compiled findings from the Stage 3 meeting comprised the master list of competencies (see Appendix A).

Results

From the separate group meetings which took place during Stage 2, the special education group and the general education group both identified 49 of the same competencies in the Common category (see Table 2). The general education group further identified 61 competencies in the Common category not identified by the special education group (see Table 2). The special education group identified 71 competencies in the Common category not identified by the general education group (see Table 2).

Table 2

Number of Teacher Competencies Identified as Common

Area	Competencies Identified by Gen. Ed. and Spe. Ed. as Common	Competencies Identified Only by Gen.Ed. as Common	Competencies Identified Only by Spe. Ed. as Common
Planning and Managing the Teaching and Learning Environment	11	14	15
Characteristics of Learners /Learning Theories	3	6	1
Instructional Content and Practice	12	23	7
Collaboration /Consultation	4	4	8
Managing Behavior /Social Interaction	0	2	12
Teacher/Family Communications/Involvement	2	3	4
Assessment / Diagnosis/ Evaluation	4	7	12
Professional and Ethical Practices	11	2	7
Legal Issues in Special Education and Elementary Education	2	0	3
Record Keeping	0	0	2
Total	49	61	71

Six competencies were identified in the Special Education category by only the general education group (see Table 3). Two competencies were identified in the Special Education category by only the special education group (see Table 3). Four competencies were identified in the General Education category by only the general education group (see Table 3). No competencies were identified in the General Education category by the special education group.

Two competencies, which were identified by the special education group in the Common category, were placed in the Special Education category by the general education group (see Table 4). One competency was identified in the Common category by the special education group while the general education group placed it in the general education category instead (see Table 4).

During the Stage 3 meeting, the group of general education and special education participants came to consensus that 135 competencies were essential for both general education and special education and placed under the Common heading. Competencies which were a source of disagreement in Stage 2 were discussed, clarified and, when necessary, rewritten to reflect the consensus of the group. After clarification and/or rewriting, group members indicated that all remaining competencies were essential for both general education and special education. Thus, no competencies were deemed to be essential only for special education or only for general education. During the process of

Table 3

Number of Teacher Competencies Identified for Special Education or General Education

Area	Competencies Identified Only by Gen. Ed. for Spe. Ed.	Competencies Identified Only by Spe. Ed. for Spe. Ed.	Competencies Identified Only by Gen. Ed. for Gen. Ed.
Planning and Managing the Teaching and Learning Environment	4	0	0
Characteristics of Learners /Learning Theories	0	1	2
Instructional Content and Practice	1	0	0
Collaboration /Consultation	0	0	0
Managing Behavior /Social Interaction	0	0	0
Teacher/Family Communications/Involvement	0	0	0
Assessment / Diagnosis/ Evaluation	0	0	0
Professional and Ethical Practices	1	0	2
Legal Issues in Special Education and Elementary Education	0	0	0
Record Keeping	0	1	0
Total	6	2	4

Table 4

Number of Teacher Competencies Identified by Special Education as Common and by General Education for Special Education or General Education

Area	Competencies Identified by Spe. Ed. as Common and by Gen Ed. for Spe. Ed.	Competencies Identified by Spe. Ed. as Common and by Gen. Ed. for Gen. Ed.
Planning and Managing the Teaching and Learning Environment	1	0
Characteristics of Learners /Learning Theories	0	1
Instructional Content and Practice	0	0
Collaboration /Consultation	1	0
Managing Behavior /Social Interaction	0	0
Teacher/Family Communications/Involvement	0	0
Assessment / Diagnosis/ Evaluation	0	0
Professional and Ethical Practices	0	0
Legal Issues in Special Education and Elementary Education	0	0
Record Keeping	0	0
Total	2	1

group competency clarification, modifications were made to some names of the original ten areas used for classifying competencies to more accurately reflect the nature of the remaining competencies (see Appendix A for the master list of final competencies arranged into the modified areas).

Discussion

Competencies for beginning inclusion teachers were examined from two perspectives: formal and informal knowledge. Formal knowledge referred to those general and special education competencies identified by professional organizations or reflected by professional literature. Informal knowledge concerned those competencies, not necessarily represented in formal documents, that experienced teachers possess about the daily operation and instruction of students both with and without disabilities.

Both general educators and special educators in the study seemed to rely heavily upon formal knowledge (i.e. competencies identified by professional organizations or those in the published literature). Although informal knowledge was stressed as an important component of the task, no competencies were identified by either the general educators or special educators solely based upon informal knowledge. All competencies listed during all stages of the process reflected a basis of existing competencies already in published form. Modifications to some competencies were made by both general and

special educators (e.g. partial rewording, word omissions, combinations of competencies, etc.).

Several possible reasons may explain why informal knowledge received minimal attention in the identification of teacher competencies. Participants may have believed that competencies needed for teaching expertise were adequately reflected in formal publications, thus, there was no need to include additional ones reflecting informal knowledge. Another explanation may have been that participants asked to perform an unfamiliar task may have overly relied upon sources of formal knowledge for guidance. Also plausible is the possibility that participants were more comfortable with the wording of printed competencies rather than trying to adequately or uniformly express in written form perceived competencies based on classroom experience.

Notable is the fact that many of the same competencies were selected by both general educators and special educators, yet there was some variation in the sources of formal knowledge selected. Examination of the list of competencies generated during the Stage 2 analysis of competencies indicated that the general education group drew competencies largely from those listed in the Alabama State Department Regulations. A careful perusal of the special education list generated in Stage 2 showed that competencies were drawn from the following sources: the Alabama State Department Regulations, the CEC Common Core of Knowledge and Skills, the DLD Competencies, the

Cannon, Idol and West (1992) article, and the West and Cannon (1988) article.

General educators may have found that competencies in the Alabama State Department Regulations adequately represented a comprehensive list of competencies for teachers in inclusion settings. They may also have been more familiar with competencies traditionally associated with general educators and somewhat unclear about the exact meaning of some of the competencies contained in special education references. Many special educators have traditionally served groups of students with a wide range of abilities. Therefore, special educator participants may have found it necessary to rely on several sources to construct a comprehensive list. It is also possible that some participants in either or both groups may have misunderstood the task and that the competencies selected did not draw from all 14 sources of formal knowledge.

Only a few competencies were identified exclusively for general education or exclusively for special education. It seems that both general and special educator participants focused on the similarity of necessary teacher competencies. This is further evidenced by the master list of common competencies resulting from the final stage in the study.

Traditionally, educators have focused upon the differences in general education and special education. Perhaps the results of this study imply that practicing master teachers may be very much aware of the similarities and perceive the differences as minimal. The process of

collaboration between general educators and special educators in the study also lends support to the practice of general and special educators working together in inclusion classrooms as well as to the idea of common competencies needed for teacher training for inclusion settings.

The results of this study parallel those reported by Cannon, Idol, and West (1992). These researchers identified 96 competencies in six categories in comparison to 135 competencies in ten areas as identified in the present study. Although it is beyond the scope of this document to conduct an item-by-item analysis of competencies found in both studies, a brief perusal of the two competency lists resulted in several similarities among competencies considered essential. Competencies with the headings of Planning and Managing the Teaching and Learning Environment; Instructional Content; Practice; Evaluation; and Managing Behavior were reported in both studies. This indicates that general educators and special educators from both studies considered knowledge and skills in these areas as necessarily important for all teachers. In essence, the basic competencies identified in the two studies reflect knowledge and skills necessary for all teachers to possess, regardless of types of instructional settings or of students' abilities.

The major difference between the two studies is that the present study resulted in several competency areas being identified by the teachers which were not included by Cannon, Idol and West (1992). These included those related to: (a) characteristics of learners and

learning theories, (b) collaboration and consultation techniques, (c) skills for communicating with parents and promoting their involvement, (d) special education referral process, (e) maintenance of student school records, cumulative records, and special education records, (f) professional and ethical practices, and (g) legal issues in special education and elementary education.

West and Cannon (1988) noted the importance of collaborative consultation competencies by reporting 47 essential collaborative consultation competencies for general and special education. Although the present inclusion study resulted in the identification of only 14 essential collaboration/consultation competencies, there were several similarities among those identified in both studies.

Advantages and disadvantages of each study can be recognized when comparing the present inclusion study with the Cannon, Idol and West (1992) study and the West and Cannon (1988) study. The present study seemed to be more comprehensive than either of the other studies in that it contained a broader range of competencies considered essential for general education and special education. Yet, overall the individual competencies in the other studies may have been written more specifically with less usage of vague terms. Categorization in all three studies made for easier comparison of competencies but complete comparison was somewhat limited in that categories/areas were not uniform among the studies.

Limitations

Potential limitations of this study include: (a) competencies addressed may not provide a comprehensive list of teacher competencies needed for beginning inclusion teachers, (b) competencies from the sources used were difficult to compare in that some were written in vague terms while others provided detailed descriptions, (c) the nature of reading and interpreting competencies can vary among individuals, (d) discussion of competencies among participants may have influenced some to respond differently and compromise actual beliefs than if they had approached the task individually, and (e) the teachers' may have been reluctant to identify needed competencies from informal knowledge.

Implications

This study was not intended to result in closure in the process of examining competencies required of an inclusion teacher. Competency examination is a process that should be ongoing as more is learned about effective inclusion programming. The purpose of this study was to initiate this ongoing process. At this beginning stage of examining standards, the focus was on competencies that were more general in nature. Future studies should focus on the examination of competencies that are more content specific and produced by organizations that reflect specific disciplines (e.g. National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Science Teachers Association, National Council of Teachers of

English, etc.). Future research should also focus on the comparison of the master list of teacher perceptions to competencies identified by university faculty as reflected in course syllabi for courses presently required in teacher preparation programs.

Information from this work can be used as teacher education faculty and practicing teacher faculty examine options with regard to preparing educators for roles in inclusion schools. Specifically this document can be used:

- As an information resource in determining whether an undergraduate and/or graduate program targeting preparation of inclusion teachers is a feasible option;
- As a guide for the development of undergraduate/ graduate programs which prepare teachers for inclusion roles.; and
- As a guide for the development of the potentially changing roles of special educators (e.g. from preparation of direct service special education teachers to emerging new roles of special educators such as collaborative consultants, team teaching, class-within-a-class, etc.).

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Appendix A

Master List of Teacher Competencies

I. Planning and Managing the Teaching and Learning Environment

1. Utilize alternative techniques for adapting the school program for children from diverse cultural backgrounds.

2. Use strategies and techniques for facilitating the functional integration of exceptional individuals in various settings.

3. Select, adapt, and use instructional strategies and materials according to characteristics of learner.

4. Demonstrate knowledge of the relationship between learning styles and teaching styles and the need to modify teaching techniques to accommodate individual learners.

5. Develop integrated learning experiences for young children that facilitate development and learning in all areas: cognitive, language, physical, social, emotional, and aesthetic.

6. Plan, implement, and evaluate units of instruction and daily lessons.

7. Sequence, implement, and evaluate individual student learning objectives.

8. Structure lessons by beginning with overviews, advance organizers, or review of objectives; outlining the content and signaling transitions between lesson parts; calling attention to main ideas; summarizing subparts of the lesson as it proceeds; and reviewing main ideas at the end.

9. Provide content to students through student-teacher interactions (e.g., through brief presentations followed by recitation or application opportunities) rather than relying on curricular materials to convey information.

10. Develop instructional strategies for presentation of subject matter through sequencing and synthesizing the content to be taught.

11. Give appropriate feedback to students' verbal responses (e.g., acknowledging, rephrasing, restating, elaborating, incorporating relevant student comments, waiting for responses, encouraging student questions and redirecting them to the class).

12. Maximize student success by having students move in small steps through new objectives, practice new learning to mastery level, integrate new learning's with old, and generalize learning to applied situations.

13. Provide opportunity for students of all ages and abilities to develop inquiry, problem solving, critical thinking skills, and creative thinking skills.

14. Utilize methods of motivating children to learn, including, but not limited to, drawing upon their interests and everyday experiences, involving them in setting realistic goals, and providing success-oriented activities and materials in order to foster the enhancement of students' self-esteem.

15. Utilize strategies for facilitating cooperative learning, independent learning, study skills and decision-making skills in children.

16. Use strategies for facilitating maintenance and generalization of skills across learning environments.

17. Encourage student accountability for careful, complete work by consistently checking and following up with additional assignments when necessary.

18. Balance teacher control with varying degrees of student freedom according to the complexities of the learning objectives and student ability.

19. Integrate affective, social, and career/vocational skills with academic curricula.

20. Select and use appropriate equipment and technology.

21. Use instructional time properly.

22. Utilize appropriate techniques for creating and maintaining a wholesome environment that meets individual needs and fosters the development of interpersonal relationship skills with emphasis on the use of manipulative materials and play as instruments for enhancing development and learning.

23. Promote and manage a positive classroom environment.

24. Develop criteria to be used in selecting, organizing, and evaluating available space, resources, experiences, and equipment appropriate to the divergent components of the early childhood curriculum.

25. Demonstrate knowledge of the role and utilization of the paraprofessional.

26. Physically manage students.

27. Use effective strategies for classroom management which encourage autonomy and foster the development of respect for self and others.

28. Prevent classroom problems by keeping as many students as possible involved in appropriate class activities, maintaining awareness of everything happening in the class, supervising simultaneous activities, and keeping lessons and groups moving smoothly and efficiently.

II. Characteristics of Learners /Learning Theories

1. Demonstrate knowledge of historical, sociological, psychological and philosophical foundations of learning.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of human development with special emphasis on cognitive, language, physical, social, personality, and emotional development, both typical and atypical, from birth through the early childhood years.

3. Apply appropriate theories of development and learning in the design of instructional program.

4. Demonstrate knowledge of definitions, characteristics, incidence, prevalence, etiology, maintaining factors, and impact on learning for all students.

5. Utilize identification procedures for individuals with mild exceptional learning needs.

6. Demonstrate knowledge of the effects an exceptional condition may have on an individual's life.

7. Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of medical conditions and medical/pharmacological management on the teaching-learning process.

III. Instructional Content, Practice, and Evaluation

1. Plan and provide a developmentally appropriate curriculum for elementary students in accordance with the Alabama courses of study and other appropriate resources, e.g., curriculum guides. The curriculum includes the following disciplines: health education, language arts, mathematics, music, physical education, reading, sciences, social sciences; and fine arts.

2. Utilize various techniques, strategies, curriculum models, literacy models, and programs for promoting maximum development of young children, including, but not limited to, appropriate intervention methods for students with special needs, inter-disciplinary instruction, flexible grouping patterns, and cooperative learning.

3. Utilize a variety of instructional methods and materials appropriate for particular topics and situations, emphasizing student participation in hands-on activities.

4. Determine instructional needs of students through use of curriculum-based assessments that contain content of curricula taught in general classrooms.

5. Generate teaching objectives from common educational goals for all students, with variations.

6. Involve the student in setting instructional goals and charting progress.

7. Develop skill in writing instructional objectives that are measurable and observable.

8. Use learning objectives rather than textbooks and workbooks to guide the sequence of instruction.

9. Translate objectives into active learning experiences that present students with opportunities to (a) use what they already know about the subject matter (e. g., their prior knowledge) and (b) make meaningful and valid connections between the new subject and their existing knowledge structure (e.g., their schemata).

10. Use task analysis in instruction, as appropriate.

11. Demonstrate knowledge of programs and strategies that enhance growth in conceptual development, creative expression, critical thinking, problem solving, decision making, and independent learning.

12. Use instruction in learning strategies (e. g., elaboration, organization, comprehension monitoring, and affective strategies) to influence the cognitive processes that students use in learning new information.

13. Teach thinking skills and study skills.

14. Teach comprehension monitoring (i.e., metacognitive strategies that enable students to gain knowledge of and control over their own cognitive processes).

15. Utilize multiple methods of assessment (informal and formal) appropriate to the age, developmental level, learning styles, and special needs of children, including the accurate interpretation of assessment results and the integration of information gained from assessments into instructional planning.

16. Observe, assess, and record children's learning and development.

17. Develop objective, reliable, responsive measures for evaluating the effectiveness of classroom instruction and student management programs.

18. Demonstrate knowledge of and foster the developmental stages of writing and spelling.

19. Create a print rich environment to develop emergent and early literacy in the classroom.

20. Use shared reading experiences as a basis for literacy instruction.

21. Evaluate, select, and create materials based on long-range, unit, and daily objectives.

22. Evaluate, select, and appropriately use current and varied materials, resources, supplies, and equipment (including computer technology) throughout the instructional program.

23. Coordinate school, community, state, and other resources and referral services available to enhance programs for young children.

24. Demonstrate ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing.

25. Demonstrate knowledge of language development and disorders; and normal growth and development.

26. Plan, implement, and evaluate strategies that foster mutual respect and understanding through verbal and nonverbal communication.

27. Plan educational services to effectively facilitate the student's ability to utilize receptive and expressive learning skills.

28. Demonstrate knowledge of democracy, democratic institutions, values, and behavior which will foster respect for self and others.

29. Guide students in the use of leisure time.

30. Demonstrate knowledge of textbooks currently used in grades K - 6 and effective ways of using them.

31. Use manipulative materials and play as instruments for enhancing development and learning.

32. Utilize knowledge of test construction (e.g., statistical and normative properties, theoretical foundation).

33. Create and maintain student records using technology and anecdotal and alternative assessments.

34. Respond to and conference with children at the appropriate developmental level in reading, writing, and spelling.

IV. Managing Behavior /Social Interaction

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the range of deviant classroom behaviors, including acting out, withdrawal, defensive, and disorganized behaviors.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of the current research in student management and motivation especially those techniques appropriate for students with emotional conflicts.

3. Demonstrate knowledge of and use appropriate strategies for crisis prevention/intervention.

4. Set goals to facilitate children's development and skills in communication, inquiry, creative expression, reasoning, and interpersonal relationships.

5. Make decisions based on knowledge of basic classroom management theories, methods and techniques.

6. Demonstrate knowledge of the importance of the teacher serving as a model when interacting with students.

7. Design a daily schedule such that learners experience a sense of routine and consistent structure.

8. Design learning activities that provide students opportunity to take responsibility for their own decision-making process and to express their thinking.

9. Utilize personal stress management techniques in the classroom.

10. Design a learning environment that encourages active participation by learners in a variety of learning activities (e.g., cooperative learning, peer tutoring, etc.) and feedback for peers and adults.

11. Foster a classroom atmosphere where students perceive themselves as free to admit not understanding.

12. Utilize techniques and instruments for observing, recording, and assessing behavior and development.

V. Collaboration /Consultation

1. Recognize the importance and benefits of communication and collaboration which promotes interaction with students, parents, and school and community personnel.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of the role of the resource teacher.

3. Demonstrate knowledge of the teacher's role as a collaborator, as a consultant, and as a team member in various teaching roles as defined by the continuum of placement options.

4. Demonstrate knowledge of communication and conference techniques, interpersonal and intergroup relations, and techniques for working with colleagues as a member of an instructional team.

5. Demonstrate ability to work effectively with members of the instructional team and professionals from related fields to respond appropriately to students.

6. Recognize that successful and lasting solutions require common goals and collaboration throughout all phases of the problem-solving process.

7. Work effectively with other teachers in modifying the regular program to place the student in the least restrictive environment.

8. Assist speech, physical and occupational therapists as needed and/or implement their recommendations for students with mild disabilities.

9. Manage timing of consultation activities to facilitate mutual decision making at each stage of the consultation process.

10. Give credit to others for their ideas and accomplishments.

11. Apply the principle of positive reinforcement to one another in the collaborative team situation.

12. Be willing and safe enough to say "I don't know...let's find out."

13. Manage conflict and confrontation skillfully throughout the consultation process to maintain collaborative relationships.

14. Demonstrate knowledge of and use community agency materials and/or personnel with impact on the elementary school program.

VI. Teacher/Family Communications/Involvement

1. Demonstrate knowledge of typical concerns of parents of individuals with exceptional learning needs and utilize appropriate strategies to help parents deal with these concerns.

2. Foster respectful and beneficial relationships between families and professionals.

3. Demonstrate knowledge of and utilize techniques for working with families and for involving family members in the education of their children.

4. Plan and conduct collaborative conferences with parents or primary care givers.

5. Encourage and assist families to become active participants in the educational team.

6. Demonstrate knowledge of parental roles in implementing a management plan for students.

7. Inform and instruct parents in implementing a management plan.

VII. Special Education Referral Process

1. Demonstrate knowledge of current research in assessment.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of the ethics of assessment.

3. Demonstrate knowledge of the need for a theoretical framework within which to make assessment decisions.

4. Demonstrate knowledge of the implication of specific disabilities (e.g., attention deficit, motoric) on assessment/evaluation procedures.

5. Demonstrate knowledge of the influence of diversity on assessment, eligibility, programming, and placement of exceptional learners.

6. Applying divergent strategies appropriate to various levels of severity within the emotional conflicts spectrum.

7. Use diagnostic and prescriptive procedures to assess sensory, language (verbal and nonverbal), speech, affective, physical, self-help, academic, and adaptive behavior skills.

8. Demonstrate knowledge of indicators of the need for special education services, as well as knowledge of policies and procedures to be followed in referring students for special education services and/or to community agencies for assistance.

9. Collaborate with parents and other professionals involved in the assessment of students with individual learning needs.

VIII. Student School Records, Cumulative Records and Special Education Records

1. Utilizing assessment data for writing an IEP.

2. Developing IEPs working in consultation with team members.

IX. Professional and Ethical Practices

1. Demonstrate knowledge of current trends, issues, and problems related to elementary special education, including the legal and ethical rights and responsibilities of teachers.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of models, theories, and philosophies that provide the basis for elementary and special education practice.

3. Articulate personal philosophy of special education including its relationship to/with regular education.

4. Demonstrate knowledge of family life and multicultural patterns which exist in homes, schools, and communities.

5. Model, teach and integrate multicultural awareness, acceptance, and appreciation throughout the curriculum.

6. Demonstrate knowledge of teacher attitudes and behaviors that positively or negatively influence student behavior.

7. Demonstrate knowledge of the need for professional growth and awareness of avenues for professional development.

8. Demonstrate knowledge of values, issues, and the existence of codes of ethics in professional life.

9. Engage in professional activities which may benefit exceptional individuals, their families and/or the teacher's colleagues.

10. Demonstrate knowledge of professional qualities essential to effective teaching, such as punctuality, communication skills, and acceptance of responsibility.

11. Relate to and collaborate with colleagues in a professional manner.

12. Use student achievement assessment data to evaluate and improve one's teaching.

13. Utilize reflection and self-evaluation as a basis for program planning and modification.

14. Demonstrate knowledge of current criteria recommended by the State Board of Education for inclusion in teacher evaluation models.

15. Develop role as a change agent (e.g., implementing strategies for gaining support, overcoming resistance).

16. Identify benefits and negative effective which could result from change efforts.

17. Advocate for services which accommodate the educational, social, and vocational needs of all students, handicapped and non handicapped.

X. Legal Issues in Special Education and Elementary Education

1. Demonstrate knowledge of legislation, public policy, and community agencies as they affect children, families, and programs for children.

2. Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of federal and state laws and regulations, as well as local policies and procedures, on the work of the teacher and curriculum development.

3. Demonstrate knowledge of assurances and due process rights related to assessment, eligibility, and placement for students who are culturally and/or linguistically diverse.

4. Demonstrate knowledge of "rights and responsibilities" of parents, students, teachers, and schools as they relate to individuals with exceptional learning needs.

5. Demonstrate knowledge of applicable laws, rules and regulations. and procedural safeguards regarding the planning and implementation of management of student behaviors.